

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 PC-01 EB-08
DOE-11 SOE-02 COME-00 MCT-01 /122 W
-----006535 161344Z /46

R 161122Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6600

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOL

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NDJAMENA 1099

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, PINS, PBOR, CD, LY

SUBJECT: CHADIAN/LIBYAN NEGOTIATIONS

SUMMARY: AS CHADIAN DELEGATION PREPARES FOR ITS
DEPARTURE TO SEBHA CONFERENCE WITH REBEL LEADERS,
A REALISTIC ASSESSMENT OF THE PROSPECT FOR SUCCESS
REMAINS IMPRACTICABLE. SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL HAS
SPENT THE LAST THREE WEEKS BALANCING ON A HIGH WIRE:
TRYING ON ONE HAND TO DO NOTHING THAT WOULD JEOPARDIZE
NEGOTIATIONS, WHILE ON THE OTHER PREPARING FOR THEIR
EXPECTED FAILURE. THE GOALS OF QADHAFI ARE EQUALLY
AMBIVALENT; WITH MUCH PUBLIC RHETORIC IN SUPPORT OF
SEBHA BUT WITH ACTIONS WHICH DO NOT COINCIDE WITH
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THE WORDS. INTENTIONS OF REBEL LEADER GOUKOUNI
REMAIN OBSCURE AND HE HAS STILL NOT EVEN AGREED
TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE. IF ANY SETTLEMENT
IS REACHED AT SEBHA, IT APPEARS RESULTS WOULD BE
UNAPPETIZING FOR WEST: HOWEVER, IF NEGOTIATIONS
FAIL, WE WOULD BE FACED WITH A CONTINUATION OF
FIGHTING AND A CONSEQUENT INCREASED DEMAND FOR US

MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

1. IN AN EFFORT TO ENHANCE, OR AT LEAST APPEAR TO ENHANCE, THE POSSIBILITIES OF SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS AT SEBHA, THE SMC HAS: (A) KEPT NEW FRENCH INVOLVEMENT EXTREMELY QUIET; (B) SENT ITS OWN DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE, WHO IS ANATHEMA TO THE REBELS, ON LEAVE OUTSIDE OF CHAD; (C) ASKED US TO DOWNPLAY ANY PUBLIC MENTION OF POSSIBLE MILITARY ASSISTANCE; (D) PERMITTED ITS EDITORIAL STAFF OF ITS MEDIA TO PROCLAIM THE POSSIBILITIES OF SEBHA AND CRITICIZE ITS DETRACTORS (KAMOUGUE); (E) AGREED TO LIBYAN EMBASSY IN NDJAMENA REOPENING MARCH 16; AND (F) EXPRESSED ITS INTENT TO SEND FOREIGN MINISTER KAMOAGAE TO TRIPOLI BEFORE SEBHA CONFERENCE TO MAKE UP (APOLOGIZE?) WITH FOREIGN MINISTER TURAYKI.

2. AT THE SAME TIME, SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL HAS BEEN BUSILY PREPARING AGAINST PROBABLE FAILURE OF SEBHA CONFERENCE: (A) NEW FRENCH MILITARY FORCES ARE NOW IN PLACE ON A LINE EXTENDING FROM MOUSSORO TO ABECHÉ THROUGH CENTRAL CHAD (WESTERN END OF LINE IN KANEM HAS NOT BEEN REINFORMED BY FRENCH, AND SEEMS TO LEAVE OPEN AVENUE OF APPROACH TO REBELS-- BUT HOPEFULLY FRENCH MILITARY KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DOING); (B) CHADIAN MILITARY UNITS HAVE BEEN CONFIDENTIAL

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RE-DEPLOYED, STRENGTHENED, AND HOPEFULLY REINVIGORATED: (C) EGYPT, MOROCCO AND ZAIRE HAVE BEEN ASKED FOR MILITARY CADRES (OFFICERS AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS) TO BOLSTER CHADIAN FORCES; (D) CHAD HAS MADE IT CLEAR IT STILL DESIRES MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES; AND (E) SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL ITSELF HAS KEPT AT ARMS LENGTH FROM AN PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION WITH THE PROSPECTS OF THE SEBHA CONFERENCE.

3. WHILE THE FOREGOING TIGHTROPE WALKING HAS BEEN EXCELLENTLY CARRIED OUT BY PRESIDENT MALLOUM, WHO HAS OBVIOUSLY RECOVERED FROM HIS SHATTERED CONDITION FOLLOWING THE FALL OF FAYA, IT HAS TAKEN ITS TOLL IN THE INTERNAL COHESION OF THE SMC. FOR INSTANCE, MALLOUM HAS CLEARLY BEEN DEALING SECRETIVELY AND IN COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FASHIONS WITH THE PRO-LIBYA PORTION OF THE SMC IN CONTRAST TO THE PRO-FRENCH PORTION OF THE SMC. THIS HAS NATURALLY LED TOWARDS FURTHER POLARIZATION, MISTRUST AND CONFUSION BETWEEN THE MEMBERS OF THE SMC. IN ADDITION, GENERAL TRAIN OF EVENTS HAS

LED CERTAIN MEMBERS TOWARDS MORE OUTSPOKEN
INDEPENDENT POSITIONS. FOREIGN MINISTER KAMOUGUE,
FORMERLY ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL MEN IN THE
SMC, HAS BEEN ISOLATED AS A STRONG OPPONENT OF
NEGOTIATIONS WITH LIBYA. LCOAL RUMORS HAVE HAD
KAMOUGUE UNDER VIRTUAL HOUSE ARREST, BUT HIS
SEEMS TO BE AN EXAGGERATION. HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR
THAT HE IS NOT EVEN PERFORMING THE ROUTINE FUNCTIONS
OF A FOREIGN MINISTER AND THAT HE IS ACTIVELY ASSESSING
HIS CHANCES OF OVERTHROWING THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT.
ON THE OTHER HAND, MINISTER OF EDUCATION GOUARA
LASSOU, A LIGHTWEIGHT WITHIN THE SMC UNTIL HIS
SWITCH OF ALLEGIANCE TO QADHAFI, HAS ASSUMED A ROLE
OF CONSIDERABLE POWER WITHIN THE SMC. HE IS ADVISING
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MALLOUM ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR SEBHA AND WILL
PROBABLY BE ONE OF THE MOST ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE THE
DELEGATION. HOWEVER, HE IS VIEWED WITH OPEN
MISTRUST BY VICE PRESIDENT DJIME AND OTHERS WHO
BELIEVE HIS ALLEGIANCEHAB QADHAFI IS SUCH THAT HE
MIGHT WELL BETRAY THE OTHER MEMBES OF THE SMC.

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AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NDJAMENA 1099

4. PARALLELING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SMC HAS BEEN AN EQUALLY AMBIVALENT PERFORMANCE BY QADHAFI. WHILE PUBLICLY TRUMPETING HIS SUPPORT OF NEGOTIONS, HE HAS QUIETLY ENGAGED IN A SERIES OF MOVES TO STRENGTHEN THE FIGHTING FORCE OF THE CHADIAN REBELS. AMONG THESE HAVE BEEN :(A) THE ARRIVAL OF NEW EQUIPMENT IN EASTERN CHAD AND THE SETTING UP OF A NEW REBEL COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IN THAT AREA; (B) PERMITTING REBELS TO CONTINUE THEIR VITRIOLIC ATTACKS ON SMC FROM RADIO TRIPOLI; (C) SET UP A TERRORIST PROGRAM IN TIBESTI AREA; (D) STARTED THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SERIES OF AIRFIELDS IN SOUTHERN LIBYA NEAR CHADIAN BORDER; AND (E) SET AN UNATTAINABLE CONDITION ON SEBHA NEGOTIATIONS, NAMELY COMPLETE CONFIDENTIAL

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WITHDRAWAL OF FRANCE FROM CHAD.

5. FOR HIS PART, REBEL LEADER GOUKOUNI HAS NOT EVEN INDICATED A WILLINGNESS TO ATTEND SEBHA CONFERENCE: ON THE CONTRARY, REBEL RADIO HAS DENOUNCED QUOTE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION UNQUOTE AND CALLED FOR A CONTINUATION OF THE AREMD STRUGGLE. THIS MAY WELL BE MERELY A NEGOTIATION PLOY TO KEEP THE PRESSURE ON THE SMC; OR IT MAY BE A LONGER RANGE MOVE ON THE PART OF QADHAFI TO APPEAR PERSONALLY REASONABLE WITHOUT REALLY DOING ANYTHING TO CURE THE DESTABILIZATION TAKING PLACE IN CENTRAL AFRICA. ONLY POSITIVE MOVE BY THE REBELS HAS BEEN TO PERMIT RED CROSS MERCY FLIGHTS TO NORTH. THE ONE FACTOR THAT IS CLEAR IS THAT AT THIS MOMENT, GOUKOUNI IS IN NO POSITION TO BE MAKING DECISIONS ON HIS OWN. WHATEVER HE IS DOING OR INTENDS TO DO MUST HAVE QADHAFI'S BLESSING.

6. COMMENTS: THE INITIAL PREPARATIONS FOR SEBHA SHOW THAT, SHOULD ANY SETTLEMENT BE REACHED, IT WOULD BE EXPENSIVE IN TERMS OF WESTERN INFLUENCE IN CHAD. THE FRENCH PRESENCE WOULD HAVE TO BE REDUCED AS WOULD SUCH VISIBLE SIGNS OF AMERICAN QUOTE IMPERIALISM UNQUOTE AS OUR DEFENSE WPACHE OFFICE. IN THE LONGER RUN, THE ATTITUDE OF THE RADICAL GOVERNMENT THAT WOULD PROBABLY COME TO POWER

IN CHAD WOULD MAKE THE CONTINUATION OF OUR AID,
USIS AND PEACE CORPS PROGRAMS QUESTIONABLE.
OUR INTERESTS IN PETROLEUM EXPLORATION WOULD NOT
BE AFFECTED, BUT THE PRESSURE FOR MORE RAPID
EXPLOITATION AND THE PRICE DEMANDED FROM OUR
COMPANIES WOULD BOTH PROBABLY INCREASE.
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7. ACCORDINGLY, WE FIND OURSELVES IN THE DILEMMA
OF HOPING CHAD CAN FIND A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT TO
ITS PROBLEMS, BUT RECOGNIZING THAT LIBYAN TERMS
WOULD BE SO STIFF THAT A SETTLEMENT WOULD BE
ANTI-WESTERN IN NATURE. IT IS ALSO DOUBTFUL IF A
QUOTE SETTLEMENT UNQUOTE WOULD REALLY SETTLE
ANYTHING: REVOLT OF THE NORTH AGAINST SOUTHERN
DOMINATED GOVERNMENT WOULD PROBABLY BE REPLACED BY REVOLT
OF THE SOUTH AGAINST NORTHERN
DOMINATED GOVERNMENT.

8. PROBABLY THE BEST WE CAN HOPE FOR IS THAT
LIBYAN DEMANDS WILL REMAIN SO EXAGGERATED THAT
SMC CANNOT ACCEPT THEM AND NEGOTIATIONS ARE
STALLED (NOT BROKEN OFF). SUCH AN OUTCOME, COMBINED
WITH CONTINUED FRENCH RESOLVE, MIGHT SOLIDIFY SMC
(WITH SOME CHANGES IN PERSONNEL) AND STABILIZE
SITUATION INTO A DE FACTO PARTITION OF CHAD. THE
MORE POPULOUS AND POTENTIALLY DEVELOPABLE PORTION
WOULD REMAIN PRO-WESTERN WHILE THE SPARSER POPULATED
NORTH WOULD BECOME A LIBYAN PUPPET (QADHAFI WOULD
HAVE GAINED STAGING AREA AGAINST SUDAN AND NIGER).
NEGOTIATIONS PROBABLY ACCOMPANIED BY LOW LEVEL
GUERRILLA ACTION AND TERRORISM COULD THEN BE
CONTINUED AD INFINITUM. SHOULD THIS OCCUR,
PRESSURE ON US FROM THE SMC, AND FROM MODERATE AFRICAN
LEADERS, TO SUPPORT CHADIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD
UNDOUBTEDLY BE INCREASED. BRADFORD

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Message Attributes

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